UNITED
NATIONS

E

Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/1999/94
15 March 1999

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-fifth session
Item 18 (b) of the provisional agenda

EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS:

NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights in the Asian and Pacific region

Report of the Secretary-General submitted in accordance with Commission resolution 1998/44

GE.99-11448 (E)

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
Introduction	1	3
I. SEVENTH WORKSHOP ON REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION	2 - 22	3
A. Mandate	2 - 7	3
B. Preparatory process for the workshop	8 - 10	4
C. Participation	11 - 13	5
D. Proceedings	14 - 21	5
E. Conclusions of the workshop	22	7
II. UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION	23 - 29	7
III. ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION	30 - 31	9
IV. STATUS OF ADHERENCE BY STATES IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION TO THE PRINCIPAL INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS	32	10

Annexes

I. Terms of reference for a regional human rights adviser for the Asian-Pacific Region	12
II. Proposals for the next steps to be taken to facilitate the process of regional cooperation for the promotion and protection of human rights and possible regional arrangements	13
III. Conclusions of the seventh Workshop on Regional Arrangements for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Asian and Pacific Region (New Delhi, 16-18 February 1999)	15

Introduction

1. In its resolution 1998/44, the Commission on Human Rights requested the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission at its fifty-fifth session a further report incorporating information on the progress achieved in implementing the resolution. The present report is submitted in accordance with that request.

I. SEVENTH WORKSHOP ON REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION

A. Mandate

2. One of the fundamental objectives of the United Nations is to promote universal respect for, and observance of, human rights and fundamental freedoms. The United Nations has consistently promoted regional cooperation in the Asia Pacific for the achievement of this objective, inter alia through the consideration of possible regional arrangements for the promotion and protection of human rights. The General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights have adopted numerous resolutions in this regard. The World Conference on Human Rights reaffirmed the fundamental role that regional and subregional arrangements could play in promoting and protecting human rights.

3. Pursuant to the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Commission, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, within the framework of the programme of technical cooperation and advisory services in the field of human rights, organized in 1982 a seminar in Colombo and, more recently, six workshops for the Asian and Pacific region, in cooperation with the host Governments: in Manila in 1990, Jakarta in 1993, Seoul in 1994, Kathmandu in 1996, Amman in 1997 and Tehran in 1998.

4. Through these workshops, a consensus has been reached on the principles and a "step-by-step", "building-blocks" approach involving extensive consultation among Governments of the region, concerning the possible establishment of regional arrangements. It has also been agreed that regional arrangements must emerge from and be directed to the needs and priorities set by Governments of the region, with roles, functions, tasks, outcomes and achievements determined by consensus.

5. The Amman workshop concluded, inter alia, that the sharing of information and the development and strengthening of national capacities for the promotion and protection of human rights are crucial in the step-by-step process of establishing regional human rights arrangements. The workshop also strongly recommended that a regional technical cooperation programme be designed and implemented as a matter of urgent priority.

6. The Tehran workshop carried this process forward and adopted for the first time agreed conclusions. Underlining its commitment to developing and strengthening national capacities, in accordance with national conditions, for the promotion and protection of human rights through regional cooperation and sharing of experiences, the workshop adopted a framework for regional technical cooperation in the Asian-Pacific designed to develop, inter alia:

National plans of action for the promotion and protection of human rights and the strengthening of national capacities;

Human rights education;

National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights; and

Strategies for the realization of the right to development and economic, social and cultural rights.

7. The aims of the seventh workshop, held in New Delhi in February 1999, were, therefore, to review progress since Tehran in the four areas identified in the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation in the Asian and Pacific Region (E/CN.4/1998/50, annex II). The workshop also attempted to identify the next steps and proposed options in the context of regional cooperation. It was therefore envisaged that the workshop would:

Review the follow-up action concerning the Regional Framework; and

Identify the next steps to be taken to facilitate the process of establishing regional cooperation for the promotion and protection of human rights and possible regional arrangements.

B. Preparatory process for the workshop

8. An open-ended working team comprising Geneva-based representatives of interested Member States from the Asian-Pacific region held two meetings in Geneva at the beginning of 1999, considering a variety of issues including the provisional programme for the workshop, rules of procedure, the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation, an expert's background paper prepared for the workshop, as well as participation by national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations. This preparatory process facilitated discussions at the workshop.

9. In view of the role of national human rights institutions and non-governmental organizations in considering regional arrangements, as well as paragraphs 5 and 7 of Commission resolution 1998/44, the provisional programme for the workshop and the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation were also distributed to the national human rights commissions which are members of the Asia Pacific Forum and to regional and international NGOs active in the region and in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, which were invited to the workshop by the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Subregional intergovernmental organizations in the region as well as United Nations and other international agencies and embassies in New Delhi were also invited to send observers to the workshop.

10. Prior to the beginning of the workshop, background papers were distributed to all participants. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights compiled a preliminary compendium containing a selection of national plans of action for human rights and for human rights education established in countries of the Asian-Pacific region, and national legislation, decrees and constitutional provisions establishing the national

human rights institutions existing in the region. Two background papers, one by Mr. A. Singupta, independent expert of the Commission on Human Rights on the right to development, on realizing the right to development and another by Mr. C. Dias on regional cooperation for the promotion and protection of human rights were also made available to the participants. In addition, the report of the third Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, held in Jakarta from 7 to 9 September 1998, was also made available to all participants.

C. Participation

11. The New Delhi workshop enjoyed wide participation from all the Asian and Pacific subregions. Governments of the following 29 countries were represented: Australia, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, China, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Japan, Jordan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic and Thailand.

12. The following national human rights commissions which are members of the Asia-Pacific Forum were also represented: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, Australia; Commission on Human Rights, Philippines; Human Rights Commission, New Zealand; National Commission on Human Rights, Indonesia; Human Rights Commission, Sri Lanka; National Human Rights Commission, India.

13. The following non-governmental organizations from the Asian-Pacific region or with a focus in the region, participated in the workshop: Asia-Pacific Human Rights Forum, World Muslim Congress, Asia Human Rights Documentation Centre, International Commission of Jurists, People's Watch-Tamil Nadu, Indian Council of Education, International Institute for Non-Aligned Studies, Coordinating Committee of Human Rights Organizations in Thailand, Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, International Alliance of Women, and Rashtriya Samajik Mahila Sangaman. In addition, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) attended the workshop as observers.

D. Proceedings

14. On 16 February 1999, the workshop was opened with statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of India and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The workshop then discussed in detail the proposed areas of regional cooperation.

15. The workshop was divided into five sessions, during which the following subjects were dealt with: session I - Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation in the Asian and Pacific region; session II - National plans of action for the promotion and protection of human rights and the strengthening of national capacities and human rights education; session III - National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights; session IV - Strategies for the realization of the right to development and economic, social and cultural rights; and session V - Prospects for and next steps in the development of regional cooperation in the Asian-Pacific region. In each of the sessions, discussion was preceded by an introductory statement by an expert.

16. Throughout the sessions, a number of participants referred to the guiding principles agreed during previous workshops, in particular: the importance of an inclusive, step-by-step, practical and "building-blocks" approach towards enhancing regional cooperation for the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with the pace and priorities to be set up by the Governments of the region by consensus; the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights - civil, cultural, economic, political, social - and the right to development; the belief that developing and strengthening national capacities for the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with national conditions provides the strongest foundation for effective and enduring regional cooperation in the field of human rights.

17. Many participants affirmed that the primary goal of the process that was under way was the development of regional cooperation through the building of national capacities and an exchange of experiences within the region, particularly on the basis of the regional cooperation programme developed and implemented by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. In that regard, participants welcomed the decision of the High Commissioner to allocate US$ 730,000 for the implementation of the regional projects foreseen under the Tehran Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation in the Asian and Pacific Region and took note of the decision by the High Commissioner to make available, at the request of Member States, the services of a regional human rights adviser as a regional project officer in connection with the implementation of technical cooperation in the Asian-Pacific region. The terms of reference of the regional human rights adviser are attached to the report as annex I.

18. National practices and experiences were briefly described by a number of representatives, who shared positive initiatives recently taken in their own countries. These included the following:

Human rights education action plans;

National plans of action in the field of human rights (including their preparation);

Legislative reform;

Establishment and strengthening of national human rights institutions;

Strategies for the realization of the right to development and economic, social and cultural rights;

Signature and/or ratification of international human rights instruments;

Increased NGO participation in and contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights;

Technical cooperation projects.

19. There was consensus on the central role which had been and would be played by the annual intergovernmental workshops, with the assistance of the team in Geneva. The annual workshop, therefore, should be the key forum for

discussion of initiatives for regional cooperation, including through the proposed technical cooperation programme. In this connection, participants at the workshop decided that the future annual workshops should hold an in-depth discussion of a specific theme pertaining to one of the four areas identified under the Tehran Framework, to be agreed upon by the team in Geneva comprising Geneva-based representatives of the Governments of the Asian-Pacific region.

20. The exchange of views concerning the strengthening of national human rights capacities by sharing of expertise, experiences and best practices was followed by a request to establish a Bulletin Board on the regional technical cooperation activities under the Tehran Framework

21. Finally, the workshop called upon the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to develop and implement the proposals for the steps to be taken in the four areas identified in the Tehran Framework, as agreed upon in New Delhi, and to report periodically to the team in Geneva as well as to the next workshop on the progress achieved. These proposals are attached to this report as annex II.

E. Conclusions of the workshop

22. Following informal consultations and discussions in the plenary session, the seventh workshop arrived at agreed conclusions on 18 February 1999. The text of the conclusions is attached to this report as annex III.

II. UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMME OF TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION

23. OHCHR continues to pay particular attention to ensuring that the countries of the Asian and Pacific region benefit from all the activities under the programme of technical cooperation in the field of human rights funded either through the United Nations regular budget or the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights.

24. As of mid-1998, OHCHR had ongoing technical cooperation projects and activities in the following countries of the Asian-Pacific region: Bhutan, Cambodia, Mongolia, Nepal and Papua New Guinea; there were also activities being undertaken in Palestine. The projects dealt with the administration of justice, the penal system, establishment of a national human rights commission, raising public awareness of human rights and facilitating national incorporation and implementation of international human rights treaties. As of 30 September 1998 the technical cooperation budgetary allocation for the Asian-Pacific region constituted 11.9 per cent of the total budget as compared with 18 per cent in 1997*.

---

* This figure does not include technical cooperation-related activities being developed in Indonesia, China and Yemen or several significant missions by the Special Adviser on National Institutions to advise countries in the region wishing to establish such institutions (e.g. Bangladesh, Fiji, Thailand).

25. For 1999, OHCHR has technical cooperation projects in an advanced stage of formulation in the following countries of the Asia and Pacific region:

(a) Indonesia: support for the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Human Rights. Following the memorandum of intent signed by the Government and OHCHR in October 1994 and the memorandum of understanding signed in August 1998, a technical cooperation project which will require the establishment of a field office to support all programmes and activities is expected to start in early 1999;

(b) Philippines: protecting the rights of children in conflict with the law. The project is being implemented jointly by OHCHR and UNICEF;

(c) Viet Nam: a project in the area of the administration of juvenile justice is being planned.

26. Three projects formulated by OHCHR in 1998 were relevant to the Tehran Framework and the concerns addressed by the New Delhi workshop:

(a) A project with the Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights to facilitate the organization of the third Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (Jakarta, 7-9 September 1998) to promote cooperation between and strengthen existing national institutions and to encourage States in the process of establishing national human rights institutions;

(b) A global project to strengthen the OHCHR programme on national institutions by developing a coordinated strategy on national institutions for adoption and implementation by the High Commissioner; and

(c) A global programme on integration of economic, social and cultural rights into technical cooperation practices and procedures by:

(i) Undertaking a detailed assessment of past and current technical cooperation practices with respect to economic, social and cultural rights;

(ii) Collecting and collating relevant expertise from other United Nations technical cooperation agencies;

(iii) Developing a resource guide to economic, social and cultural rights;

(iv) Developing a manual for United Nations officials and practitioners on economic, social and cultural rights;

(v) Developing, executing and evaluating a training programme (comprising two training courses) on economic, social and cultural rights for the staff of the technical cooperation programme.

27. For 1999, the OHCHR technical cooperation programme envisages activities in some 13 Asian-Pacific countries with activities including needs-assessment

missions, support for national human rights plans of action, support for establishing and strengthening national institutions and systems of administration of justice, establishing national forensic units and support for participation in workshops and other regional activities, in such countries as Bangladesh, China, Yemen and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

28. Technical cooperation between OHCHR and China was discussed and agreed upon during the High Commissioner's visit to China. As indicated in the memorandum of intent signed on 7 September 1998, a follow-up visit has already been agreed. The primary objective of the visit, which will take place in March 1999, is, inter alia, to review the technical assistance needs for strengthening national capacities in promoting and protecting the rule of law, democracy and all human rights.

29. The attention of the Commission is drawn to the Secretary-General's report on advisory services in the field of human rights, including the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights (E/CN.4/1999/99), which contains detailed information regarding the activities undertaken in 1998 in the context of the United Nations programme of technical cooperation.

III. ACTIVITIES OF NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTITUTIONS FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION

30. The third Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Forum, which was held in Jakarta in September 1998, brought together senior representatives of the 6 national human rights commissions in the region, and observers from 12 Governments from within the region and 3 Governments (Canada, Norway and the United Kingdom) from outside the region. Also present were representatives of institutions in Fiji, Hong Kong and the Islamic Republic of Iran, and several international, regional and national NGOs. Two commissions from outside the region (Canada and South Africa) were also represented. The meeting adopted a specific theme, "Human Rights and the Economic Crisis in the Asia-Pacific", and examined the role of national institutions both at the domestic and the international level. Developments in States within the region engaged in establishing national institutions and developments at international level to strengthen national institutions were reviewed. Participants at the Forum anticipated that national human rights commissions would be established in Bangladesh, Fiji, Mongolia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Korea and Thailand by the end of 1999.

31. A number of important outcomes of the Jakarta meeting included the establishment of an Advisory Council of Jurists to assist in developing human rights jurisprudence, the establishment of a Forum Website and the decision to hold a workshop in 1999 on working in partnership with NGOs. The report of this meeting is available for consultation at the secretariat.

IV. STATUS OF ADHERENCE BY STATES IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION TO THE PRINCIPAL INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS

32. The following is a list of 46 States of the Asian-Pacific region that are parties to the United Nations human rights instruments listed, along with the year of their adherence/acceptance ("s" indicates that the State party is a signatory). An asterisk signifies acceptance by the State party of the competence of the relevant treaty body to receive and process individual communications. As at 2 February 1999, 185 States Members of the United Nations and 8 non-member States were parties to one or more of these instruments.

State party	ICESCR	ICCPR	OPT1	OPT2	CERD	CEDAW	CAT	CRC	MWC	No. treaties ratified
Afghanistan	1983	1983	-	-	1983	s:1980	1987	1994	-	5
Australia	1975	1980	1991	1990	1975*	1983	1989*	1990	-	8
Bahrain	-	-	-	-	1990	-	1998	1992	-	3
Bangladesh	1998	-	-	-	1979	1984	1998	1990	1998	6
Bhutan	-	-	-	-	s:1973	1981	-	1990	-	2
Brunei Darussalam	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1995	-	1
Cambodia	1992	1992	-	-	1983	1992	1992	1992	-	6
China	s:1997	s:1998	-	-	1981	1980	1988	1992	-	4
Cyprus	1969	1969	1992	-	1967*	1985	1991*	1991	-	7
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	1981	1981		-	-	-	-	1990	-	3
Fiji	-	-	-	-	1973	1995	-	1993	-	3
India	1979	1979	-	-	1968	1993	s:1997	1992	-	5
Indonesia	-	-	-	-	-	1984	1998	1990	-	3
Iran (Islamic Republic of)	1975	1975	-	-	1968	-	-	1994	-	4
Iraq	1971	1971	-	-	1970	1986	-	1994	-	5
Japan	1979	1979	-	-	1995	1985	-	1994	-	5
Jordan	1975	1975	-	-	1974	1992	1991	1991	-	6
Kuwait	1996	1996	-	-	1968	1994	1996	1991	-	6
Lao People's Democratic Republic	-	-	-	-	1974	1981	-	1991	-	3
Lebanon	1972	1972	-	-	1971	1997	-	1991	-	5
Malaysia	-	-	-	-	-	1995	-	1995	-	2
Maldives	-	-	-	-	1984	1993	-	1991	-	3
Marshall Islands	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1993	-	1

State party	ICESCR	ICCPR	OPT1	OPT2	CERD	CEDAW	CAT	CRC	MWC	No. treaties ratified
Micronesia (Federated States of)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1993	-	1
Mongolia	1974	1974	1991	-	1969	1981	-	1990	-	6
Myanmar	-	-	-	-	-	1997	-	1991	-	2
Nepal	1991	1991	1991	1992	1971	1991	1991	1990	-	8
New Zealand	1978	1978	1989	1990	1972	1985	1989*	1993	-	8
Oman	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1996	-	1
Pakistan	-	-	-	-	1966	1996	-	1990	-	3
Palau	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1995	-	1
Papua New Guinea	-	-	-	-	1982	1995	-	1993	-	3
Philippines	1974	1986	1989	-	1967	1981	1986	1990	1995	8
Qatar	-	-	-	-	1976	-	-	1995	-	2
Republic of Korea	1990	1990	1990	-	1978*	1984	1995	1991	-	7
Samoa	-	-	-	-	-	1992	-	1994	-	2
Saudi Arabia	-	-	-	-	1997	-	1997	1996	-	3
Singapore	-	-	-	-	-	1995	-	1995	-	2
Solomon Islands	1982	-	-	-	1982	-	-	1995	-	3
Sri Lanka	1980	1980	1997	-	1982	1981	1994	1991	1996	8
Syrian Arab Republic	1969	1969	-	-	1969	-	-	1993	-	4
Thailand	-	1996	-	-	-	1985	-	1992	-	3
United Arab Emirates	-	-	-	-	1974	-	-	1997	-	2
Vanuatu	-	-	-	-	-	1995	-	1993	-	2
Viet Nam	1982	1982	-	-	1982	1982	-	1990	-	5
Yemen	1987	1987	-	-	1972	1984	1991	1991	-	6
TOTAL	23	22	8	3	32	32	17	46	3	

Key

ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
OPT1	Optional Protocol to the ICCPR
OPT2	Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR
CERD	International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
MWC	International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families

Annex I

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR A REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS ADVISER
FOR THE ASIAN-PACIFIC REGION

Mandate

1. The General Assembly established the programme of advisory services in the field of human rights in its resolution 926 (X) of 14 December 1955.

2. In the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (Part II, para. 7), "The World Conference on Human Rights recommends that Human Rights officers be assigned if and when necessary to regional offices of the United Nations with the purpose of disseminating information and offering training and other technical assistance in the field of human rights upon the request of concerned Member States ...".

Functions

3. The Regional Human Rights Adviser would provide assistance to countries of the region in connection with the implementation of technical cooperation programmes particularly in the areas referred to in the Framework for Regional Cooperation agreed upon in Tehran; be available for consultation with Governments on technical cooperation-related issues; assist, at the request of Governments, in developing technical cooperation programmes; participate as a resource person in seminars, workshops and other forums organized by the Governments of the region.

Administrative and logistical arrangements

4. The Regional Adviser would be based in a United Nations office or UNDP regional office in the region (e.g. ESCAP) and provided with basic administrative and secretariat support from within that United Nations or UNDP office.

Budget

5. The Regional Adviser would be funded from the regular technical cooperation budget of the United Nations available to OHCHR. That budget complements assistance available to developing countries under other United Nations programmes.

Annex II

PROPOSALS FOR THE NEXT STEPS TO BE TAKEN TO FACILITATE THE PROCESS OF REGIONAL COOPERATION FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND POSSIBLE REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

The seventh workshop on Regional Arrangements for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights in the Asian and Pacific Region held in New Delhi from 16 to 18 February 1999 recommended that the following activities be organized under the regional technical cooperation programme during the period 1999-2000:

1. National plans of action for the promotion and protection of human rights and the strengthening of national capacities

(a) Inter-sessional regional workshop in Thailand on national plans of action for the promotion and protection of human rights. The workshop could, inter alia: examine the contribution that national plans of action can make to the advancement of human rights; learn from practical experience of States about the process of developing national plans of action; formulate strategies for the creation of comprehensive national plans of action, including strategies for implementation; identify the key components of national plans of action;

(b) Inter-sessional regional workshop on compliance with reporting obligations under international human rights standards.

2. Human rights education

(a) Inter-sessional regional workshop to share experiences and discuss best practices concerning national plans of action for human rights education and related activities;

(b) Additional activities by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, in cooperation with UNESCO, in this area could include: exchange of experiences in the field of human rights education involving national authorities responsible for education, in particular officials in charge of framing curricula at school level; establishment of and support to human rights programmes in universities in the region; programmes of training and higher education fellowships for scholars and officials of the region specializing in human rights, particularly in institutions of higher learning within the region; development of networking among educational institutions in the region specializing in human rights issues; development and dissemination of printed and audio-visual material on human rights education in English as well as major languages of the region.

3. National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights

(a) Inter-sessional regional workshop on national human rights institutions for countries in the region interested in establishing such institutions;

(b) Support to the workshops to be organized by the Asian-Pacific Forum in Sri Lanka in June 1999 and in Manila in September 1999.

4. Strategies for the realization of the right to development and economic, social and cultural rights

(a) Inter-sessional regional workshop on the right to development and economic, social and cultural rights focusing on the implementation of these rights and steps to be taken in this regard at the national and international levels;

(b) The inter-sessional regional workshop should focus, inter alia, on issues relating to international cooperation including quantifiable benchmarks for the implementation of the right to development; identifying obstacles to the realization of these rights; and proposing relevant actions to strengthen national capacities for the promotion and protection of these rights. The inter-sessional regional workshop should include among the participants national planning authorities, national institutions, international development and financial institutions as well as development cooperation experts.

Annex III

CONCLUSIONS OF THE SEVENTH WORKSHOP ON REGIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE PROMOTION AND PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC REGION (NEW DELHI, 16-18 FEBRUARY 1999)

Representatives of Governments of the Asian and Pacific region attending the New Delhi workshop held from 16-18 February 1999,

Recalling the important contributions made by previous workshops and in particular the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation agreed to at the Tehran workshop, held from 28 February to 2 March 1998,

Reaffirming the universality, indivisibility, interdependence and interrelatedness of all human rights - civil, cultural, economic, political, social - and the right to development,

Recognizing that democracy, development and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms are interdependent and mutually reinforcing,

Committed to enhancing regional cooperation to promote universal respect for, and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Mindful of the vastness of and diversities within the Asian and Pacific region,

Welcoming the participation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in the New Delhi workshop,

Expressing appreciation for the inspiring addresses of H.E. Mr. Jaswant Singh, Minister of External Affairs, and Ms. Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, at the opening session of the workshop,

Having reviewed the progress achieved in implementing the regional technical cooperation programme agreed upon in Tehran,

Welcoming the in-depth discussions held during the workshop on the effective realization of the right to development and economic, social and cultural rights and expressing appreciation for the paper presented by Mr. A. Sengupta, the independent expert on the right to development of the Commission on Human Rights,

Reiterate the importance of an inclusive, step-by-step, practical and "building-blocks" approach towards enhancing regional cooperation for the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with the pace and priorities to be set by the Governments of the region by consensus;

Reaffirm that developing and strengthening national capacities for the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with national conditions provides the strongest foundation for effective and enduring regional cooperation in the field of human rights;

Call for the mainstreaming and effective coordination of technical cooperation activities in all areas of human rights as an essential element of promotional approaches that build capacity and ensure effective solutions;

Affirm that the primary goal of the process under way is the development of regional cooperation through the building of national capacities and an exchange of experiences within the region, particularly on the basis of the regional technical cooperation programme developed and implemented by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, with the support of the international community through the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights;

Reaffirm that the central decision-making role in determining the content of the regional technical cooperation programme, evaluating the progress achieved and determining actions to be taken under the programme in the future will continue to be played by the annual intergovernmental workshop with the assistance of the open-ended team in Geneva comprising Geneva-based representatives of the Governments of the Asian-Pacific region;

Recognize that the continuing process of regional cooperation and its practical results are essential to discussions on possible regional arrangements;

Welcome the decision of the High Commissioner to allocate US$ 730,000 for the implementation of the regional projects foreseen under the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation for the Asian and Pacific Region adopted in Tehran;

Take note of the decision made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to make available, at the request of Member States, the services of a regional human rights adviser as a regional project officer in connection with the implementation of technical cooperation in the Asian-Pacific region in accordance with the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation;

Welcome the reports of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights on the activities carried out since Tehran in the four areas of the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation;

Welcome the indication provided by the Governments of Thailand and Japan that they would host a regional inter-sessional workshop each in one of the four areas;

Call upon the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to establish a Bulletin Board on the regional technical cooperation activities under the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation;

Decide that the annual regional workshop should take up for in-depth discussion a specific theme, pertaining to one of the four areas identified under the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation, to be agreed upon by the open-ended team in Geneva;

Call upon the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to develop and implement the proposals made in New Delhi in the four areas in the Framework for Regional Technical Cooperation and to report periodically to the open-ended team in Geneva as well as to the next workshop on the progress achieved.